



# NEWS FROM GUYANA

GUYANA - A Nation On The Move

*Guyana Surinam 83 dy*

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1969

No. 35/1969

Item 1:

GDF OCCUPY UNAUTHORISED  
SURINAM BORDER CAMP

GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE soldiers are now occupying an unauthorised Surinam border camp vacated by Surinam forces on August 19, after a bloodless skirmish in the disputed New River area on Guyana's

South-Eastern borders.

Giving details of the incident in Parliament on August 21, the Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes Burnham, made the following statement:

"Last week-end the Guyana Defence Force in the course of patrolling Guyana's borders with Surinam, identified an unauthorised camp and partially completed airstrip on Guyana territory west of the Corentyne River within the New River Triangle area. On Tuesday, 19th August, in the course of investigating the camp, the Guyana Defence Force encountered a number of uniformed Surinamers. The Surinamers offered armed resistance to the Defence Force for a short period before abandoning the camp and fleeing in the direction of the Surinam border.

In the action which took place the Guyana Defence Force was fired upon by the Surinam personnel in Guyana territory. The Guyana Defence Force displayed the greatest restraint in refraining from firing upon the Surinamers once the latter were in flight.

The Guyana Defence Force exercise from which there were no casualties was essentially a police action to protect Guyana's territorial integrity and to remove from Guyanese soil unauthorised alien personnel.

In 1967, a somewhat similar situation developed in the New River Triangle area when the Security Forces of Guyana evicted a number of Surinamers found trespassing on the Guyana side of the border.

Following this incident, a clear understanding was arrived at between the Governments of Guyana and Surinam that Surinam would refrain from encroaching upon Guyana territory.

The Guyana Government is therefore shocked to find that Surinam completely violated this understanding by infiltrating armed personnel into the area and establishing a military camp under the flag of Surinam, at a point which strategically commands the confluence of the New River and the Corentyne.

The Government of Guyana remains ready and anxious to hold discussions as it always has been. On the last occasion when the border question was jointly examined by the Governments of Guyana, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Surinam on June 23rd of 1966 in London, the representative of Surinam, Dr. Essed, unequivocally stated that the next step

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issued by the ministry of information, georgetown

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would be to invite the Government of Guyana to continue the discussions. The Guyana Government is still awaiting that invitation.

During the last term of office (September 1968) of Mr. Pengel, then Minister-President of Surinam, the Guyana Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes Burnham, expressed in a letter to Mr. Pengel, the desire to discuss fully, co-operation and settlement of all issues between their two countries. There was no reply or reaction to this letter.

The Guyana Government will always be conscious of the traditional ties and friendship between the people of Guyana and Surinam, and will do everything in its power to maintain and promote these relations."

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Item 2:

THE GUYANA GOVERNMENT has refuted charges of provocation and racism levelled at it by neighbouring Venezuela.

VENEZUELAN CHARGES  
REFUTED BY GUYANA

According to a Reuter report published here on August 21, the Venezuelan Foreign Minister, Senor Aristides Calvani, accused Guyana of "adopting a warlike and provocative attitude" and of "setting up a racial government in the very heart of Latin America".

But a release from the Guyana Ministry of External Affairs, commenting on Senor Calvani's charges, stated:

"No one is deceived by the most recent posturing of the Venezuelan Government as expressed by Minister Calvani. The pattern of Venezuelan hostility to and aggression against Guyana is clear and well-known and her contempt for and violation of Treaties over recent years well documented. One needs only to recall the Venezuelan occupation of the Guyanese half of Ankoko and the admission of a former Minister of Interior, Senor Mora, that Venezuela had given military training to the Rupununi rebels who are now harboured, and succoured in villages near the border. The noble traditions of Bolivar have been defiled by Venezuela."

As to the Minister's reference to racism in Guyana, the release said: "This should be dismissed for the arrant nonsense that it is."

The release continued: "It is significant that the Foreign Minister of Venezuela went out of his way to say that Venezuela had nothing to do with the recent Guyana/Surinam border situation since no such allegation has been made by Guyana. The Venezuelan Foreign Minister is obviously attempting to use the New River Triangle situation as a smokescreen for further acts of Venezuelan aggression. Clearly there is need for Minister Calvani to examine his conscience and his archives more deeply."

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Item 3:

A GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA spokesman has expressed the hope that the Surinam Government will accept "Guyana's continued wish for friendship" in the spirit in which it is offered and will "do nothing

to escalate the unfortunate situation which has arisen from the Surinam Government sending armed forces onto Guyanese soil".

Commenting on a news report that Surinam might close the Corentyne River (the western shore highwater mark of which is the official boundary between the two countries) to Guyanese shipping, the spokesman said that this was a position which could only be regarded as "a further indication of Surinam's inexplicably hostile intent towards the people of Guyana".

Any ban on Guyanese use of the river, the spokesman said, would specifically damage the livelihood of fishermen and foresters who over the years have utilised the waterway with the full knowledge of the Surinam authorities and for purely peaceful purposes, in accordance with accepted international usage.

He added: "Any act on the part of the Surinam Government aimed directly at causing hardship and suffering to Guyanese civilians would be in sharp contrast to the manner of Guyana's removal of Surinam mili-

NEWS IN PICTURES

SURINAM

BORDER

INCIDENT



Aerial view of the unauthorised Surinam camp on the New River.

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Close-up of a section of the camp, showing machine-gun tower (arrow, top left), water tank (top right), and underground bunker (black arrow, bottom left).



Close-up of underground bunker fortification, showing camouflage.

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Surinam Police Defence Force prisoner, Private Van Dams, under close escort on the airstrip at Camp Jaguar prior to being flown to Timehri Airport. Private Van Dams, who was lost in the bush after fleeing from the airstrip when the GDF forces landed, was taken prisoner when he surrendered two days later.



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